

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED VALIDATION OF *VOLUTA EPISCOPALIS*
LINNAEUS, 1758. Z.N.(S.) 1728
(see volume 22, pages 355–356)

By R. Tucker Abbott (*Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Pa., U.S.A.*)

I urge the Commission not to use its plenary powers concerning *Voluta mitra* vs. *episcopalis*. The problem is well-known among present-day mollusk taxonomists and has been adequately discussed and solved by Dodge (1955), Ray (1954, *Mem. Indian Mus.* 14 : 42), and MacNeil (1960, *U.S.G.S. Prof. Paper* 339 : 91). Contrary to Coan's statements, *Mitra mitra* Linnaeus, 1758, has been used by most workers for the last 20 years. The name *episcopalis* Linnaeus, 1758, has been considered a synonym of *mitra* Linnaeus, 1758, by most workers and in nearly all recent popular books on conchology: Cernohorsky (1965, *Veliger* 8 : 91); Cate and Burch (1964, *Veliger* 6 : 144); Kuroda, in all his works from 1928 (*Cat. Shell-bearing Moll. Amami-Oshima*: 54) to 1960 (*A Cat. Moll. Okinawa Islands*: 35); probably all other Japanese scientific and popular works (Kira, 1955, *Col. Ill. Shells Japan*: 68) (Hirase, 1938); McMichael (1960, *Shells Aust. Sea-Shore*: 100); Abbott (1962, *Sea Shells of the World*: 92); J. Allan (1950, *Australian Shells*: 178); Macnae and Kalk (1958, *Nat. Hist. Inhaca*: 128).

The use of *Mitra episcopalis* Linnaeus has not been entirely abandoned, probably because of J. Thiele's 1929 use (*Handbuch Syst. Weicht.* 1 : 340). Popular writers and other workers using this name are W. F. Webb, Maxwell Smith, Spencer Tinker (1952), A. Solem (1953, *Fieldiana* 34 : 224), and R. Platt (*Nat'l. Geogr. Mag.*, July, 1949). I erroneously used *episcopalis* in 1950 (*Bull. Raffles Mus.* 22 : 84), but have used *mitra* since studying the arguments of Ray, Dodge and McMichael.

In view of recent modern revisions by Ray (1954) and MacNeil (1960) and others, and because all of the malacologists of Japan and Australia, and most workers in the United States, India, New Zealand, England and South Africa are now using *Mitra mitra* Linnaeus, I urge that we follow the practise of Linnaeus himself (1764), Hermannsen (1848), and most of today's workers in rejecting *episcopalis* Linnaeus as a synonym of *mitra* Linnaeus.

By Walter O. Cernohorsky (*Vatukoula, Fiji Islands*)

I should like to offer the following comments on this application.

(1) The term *Voluta mitra* is in the same type face as all other species listed by Linnaeus in the 10th edition of the *Systema Naturae*; the terms "*episcopalis*" and "*papalis*" are in italics, a type face reserved for varieties of species by Linnaeus. On page 713 (1758, *Syst. Nat.*) Linnaeus listed several varieties of *Conus ammiralis*; from the type of listing, it is obvious that *episcopalis* and *papalis* were treated as varieties of *Voluta mitra*, and specific names have precedence over infraspecific names if both date from the same work.

The omission of a number after *Voluta mitra* is of little meaning as several specific names listed in the 10th edition of the *Systema Naturae* lack numbers (e.g. *Bulla cypreae*, p. 728; *Harpa costatum*, p. 738; *Strombus dentatus*, p. 745, and several others).

(2) Not only did Linnaeus revise his concept of both *Voluta mitra* and *V. papalis* in his 12th edition of the *Systema Naturae* (1767), where both were regarded as valid species, but he did so already in 1764 (*Mus. Lud. Ulric.*, 597) where the species was listed as *Voluta mitra*. Therefore Linnaeus must be rigidly construed to be his own first reviser as from 1764.

(3) It is agreed that *Voluta mitra* Linnaeus, 1758, and *V. papalis* Linnaeus, 1758, although both belonging to the genus *Mitra* Röding, 1798, are clearly separable taxa.

It is not correct to state that most authors abandoned the nominal species *Voluta mitra*, and used the name *V. episcopalis* consistently. Towards the end of the 18th century the term *Voluta mitra episcopalis sensu* Linnaeus (1758) was widely employed, i.e. Huddersford in Lister (1770, *Index* 2 : 42), Born, 1780 (*Test. Mus. Caes. Vindob.* :

228), Schröter, 1783 (*Einleit. Kemtn. Linné* 1 : 230), Favanne, 1784 (*Cab. Tour. d'Auvergne* : 179), Kämmerer, 1786 (*Cab. Schwarzb. Rudol.* : 144) and others.

The term *Voluta mitra* has also been widely used, e.g. Born, 1778 (*Ind. Rer. Nat.* : 217), Knorr, 1779 (*Del. Nat.* : 38), Herbst, 1778 (*Einl. Kennt. Gewürme* : 193), Hanley, 1858 (*Ipsa Linn. Conch.* : 231, 232, 508), Hedley, 1909 (as *Mitra mitra*, *Mar. Moll. Qld. Aust. Assoc. Adv. Sci.* : 366), Dautzenberg, 1923 (*J. Conchyl.* 68 : 31), Dautzenberg & Bouge, 1923 (*J. Conchyl.* 67 : 88), and has been used in the combination *Mitra mitra* (Linnaeus, 1758) by most subsequent authors after that date.

The species *Voluta mitra* Linnaeus, and *V. papalis* Linnaeus, are members of the genus *Mitra* Röding, 1798 (*Mus. Bolten.* : 135), provided that Lichtenstein's Introduction on page 6, dating from 10th September 1798, is accepted as the earliest date of publication. Should this date not be acceptable as the date of publication in absence of evidence to the contrary, then *Mitra Lamarck*, 1798 (dating from 21st September, 1798) would have chronological preference.

In view of the foregoing data, the Linnaean taxon *Voluta mitra* should not be suppressed, but placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology, for the following reasons:

- A. (a) It is listed in the 10th edition of the *Systema Naturae* (1758) as of specific rank, consistent with all other specific names contained in this work, and has precedence over *V. episcopalis* which is listed as of infraspecific rank.
- (b) Linnaeus acted as his own reviser in 1764 when he listed *Voluta mitra* as a valid species, and in 1767 (12th ed., *Syst. Nat.*) he reduced *V. episcopalis* to a mere variety and considered *V. papalis* to be a separate species.
- (c) The combination *Voluta mitra* L. or *Mitra mitra* L. has been in use by various writers from 1778 to the present day.
- (d) The interest of stability of molluscan nomenclature would not be served by a suppression of *Voluta mitra* L., as this combination (i.e. *Mitra mitra* L.) has been firmly entrenched in molluscan literature for the last 20 years.
- B. *Voluta episcopalis* L. should be regarded as of infraspecific rank or as an objective synonym in view of the identical bibliographic citations in the 10th edition of the *Systema Naturae*.
- C. *Voluta papalis* L., should be placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology as published in the combination *Voluta mitra papalis* (1758, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 732); an elevation in rank is provided for in the current Code. The two citations accompanying Linnaeus' indication (Lister, *Conch.*, t. 839, fig. 67 and Buonanni, *Rec. ment. occ.*, 3, t. 119) clearly depict the *V. papalis* of authors, a species distinct from *V. mitra* Linnaeus.

By David Heppell (University of Glasgow, Scotland)

While I do not wish to take sides as to whether *mitra* or *episcopalis* should be considered the valid name for the type-species, I would like to request that, since this matter is now sub judice by the I.C.Z.N., the opportunity be taken at the same time to place the generic name *Mitra* on the Official List, and in so doing, to decide once and for all to which author—Röding or Lamarck—this name should be attributed. The relevant facts have been published by Cernohorsky, 1965 (*The Veliger* 8 (2) : 77) and are, briefly, as follows:

Mitra Lamarck occurs as a caption to plate 369 of the *Tableau encyclopédique et méthodique* which is dated, according to the French Republican Calendar "An VI" which year ended 21 September 1798. In the absence of any other evidence, Cernohorsky accepts this as the date of publication for *Mitra* Lamarck.

Mitra Röding occurs on page 135 of the *Museum Boltenianum*, the title-page of which is undated. The Introduction, however, is dated 10 September 1798. In the absence of any other evidence, Cernohorsky accepts this as the earliest date of publication. *Mitra* Röding thus has eleven days' priority over *Mitra* Lamarck.

Under the provisions of Article 67 (g), *Voluta episcopalis* L. can be accepted as the type-species by designation by Montfort, 1810, in either case.